

Westhouses Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112508
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	378501
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2011
Reporting inspector	John Paddick

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	76
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Cooke
Headteacher	John Grogan
Date of previous school inspection	23 September 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited six lessons taught by three teachers and a classroom assistant. Inspectors scrutinised a wide variety of pupils' work, especially in writing, mathematics and science. They held meetings with the headteacher, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors also met with a group of pupils from Year 6. They observed the school's work and looked at the school development plan, records of pupils' progress and safeguarding documentation. Inspectors analysed 41 questionnaires from parents and carers, 40 from pupils in Years 3 to 6, and four from members of staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Has attainment in Key Stage 1 improved since the previous inspection?
- Are pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities making progress at the same rate as other pupils?
- Has lesson planning improved since the previous inspection?
- Has the school improved the quality of provision in the outside area used by children in Reception?

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than the average primary school. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make up around a seventh of the school roll. This is below the national average. Few pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils who join partway through their primary school education is far greater than average.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Westhouses Primary School provides its pupils with a good standard of education. It is a happy and welcoming school where care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. Members of staff know all the pupils exceptionally well and ensure that they are treated as individuals and thrive. Pupils feel perfectly safe in school and attend extremely regularly. They enjoy their education and have very positive views about the quality of the education they receive. Such is the school's reputation for success that many parents and carers transfer their children into the school partway through their primary education when they consider that they have not made sufficient progress elsewhere. Typical of parental comments handed in to the team during the inspection was: 'All my children have thoroughly enjoyed their school life at Westhouses. The school is welcoming, friendly and above all the members of staff always have time to listen to any concerns, comments or questions.'

The school is characterised by a good atmosphere for learning, pupils who behave well and good quality lessons. Capacity for sustained improvement is good because the school is well led and effective attention has been given to areas for improvement, such as those identified at the time of the previous inspection. For example, teachers' lesson planning is now much better and the outside area used by Reception children has been considerably upgraded. Self-evaluation is accurate and planning for improvement is carried out with precision. Assessments in Year 2 and National Curriculum test results in Year 6 have been significantly above average for the last two years, and this represents good progress and achievement for all groups of pupils. Current rates of pupils' progress are variable but good overall. Most of the pupils who joined the school in Reception are making at least good progress and some are doing better than that. Pupils who have transferred from other schools make very good progress in terms of developing a work ethic and an interest in learning. The school ensures that they quickly get over the disruption caused by moving schools and start to make good academic progress like other pupils.

Lessons are now planned well for pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They are enjoyable occasions for pupils and a variety of approaches almost always keeps them fully engaged. Occasionally the pace of learning slows when pupils are allowed a little too long to complete their tasks. The school sets challenging National Curriculum targets for its pupils, but pupils are not always clear about them because teachers do not routinely link them to work being done in class.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the pace of learning in lessons is maintained at a consistently good or better level by setting more challenging time targets for the completion of activities.
- Provide the older pupils with a full understanding of their National Curriculum targets, and ensure that work in lessons is clearly linked to them.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Many children join the school with skills and understanding below the levels expected nationally, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Achievement is good because all groups of pupils make good progress as they move from Reception to Year 6. It is difficult to compare standards between year groups with precision because numbers are so small and proportions of pupils needing extra help vary considerably from class to class. However, the school’s tracking system shows that all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who have joined late, are currently making good progress. This was confirmed during the lessons seen and by a scrutiny of pupils’ work carried out during the inspection. Exercise books show that written work is extensive, logically presented and generally above the levels expected for pupils’ age. In the current Year 6, a much larger proportion of pupils than normal can write fluently and at length, using punctuation well. These pupils also present their numerical work in a logical manner and understand how to draw relatively accurate nets of solid shapes.

Pupils’ attitudes to learning and behaviour in lessons are universally good. They are polite, cooperative and enjoy very productive relationships with the adults who work with them. They engage enthusiastically in a broad range of experiences, especially in sport, music and through visits. Pupils have a very good reputation in the area for sporting success because their teams frequently come out on top in competition with much larger schools. They have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet and know why it is important to take regular exercise. Their attendance levels are extremely good and there are no persistent absentees.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers and classroom assistants manage pupils well so there is always a good learning atmosphere in lessons. Relationships with adults and pupils are extremely productive. Lessons are mostly conducted at a brisk pace but occasionally pupils are allowed too much time to complete tasks. This is particularly evident when they are working in groups. Teachers provide pupils with plenty of interesting and challenging activities which sustain their concentration and engagement. Good provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities means that they are fully involved in lessons and have every opportunity to do well. Teachers mark pupils' written work thoroughly so they know when they have done well and when they need to make improvements. The school's excellent tracking system provides managers and staff with an accurate analysis of pupils' progress. It clearly identifies slow progress and triggers extra help to close any gaps between pupils' performance and where the school wants it to be.

The combination of good teaching, good curricular planning and excellent care, guidance and support enables all groups of pupils to make good progress with their basic skills and personal development. A recent emphasis on pupils' writing has been particularly successful in improving the quality of pupils' work. Pupils fully recognise that they benefit from an extremely wide range of extra-curricular activities, particularly sport, visits and music. These help to underpin the great strides that they make with their personal development. Good transition arrangements with providers of secondary education mean that pupils are well prepared for and confident about transferring to their next school. Pupils say that they get plenty of help when they need it. Often this is on a one-to-one basis and successfully helps to break down significant barriers to learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides the school with strong and effective leadership. He is held in high regard in the locality because he has ensured that the school continues to provide well for all groups of children from the village of Westhouses and further afield. He is ably assisted by his senior team and all other members of staff in making improvements where necessary and always seeking to provide the best possible education for the pupils. The governing body has a clear focus on ensuring that pupils are happy and that they continue to make good progress. Its members probe and challenge when necessary and play their part in ensuring that there is no place for complacency, particularly in matters of safeguarding and finance.

The school promotes equal opportunities well, and there is no evidence of discrimination of any description. Pupils from all backgrounds are equally valued and members of staff go to great lengths to ensure that they relate to each other well. Safeguarding arrangements meet national requirements well and have a high profile in the daily life of the school. All adults who have access to pupils are extremely thoroughly checked. Good promotion of community cohesion means that pupils benefit from many activities which help to draw the local community together. Examples include services in the village chapel and the concerts in the school hall. Pupils have an increasing understanding of the cultures and religions that make up Britain that is based on first-hand experience, and are justifiably proud of their success in raising money for a well for people in Sri Lanka to use.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in Reception benefit from a welcoming and safe environment and good teaching, leading to good progress across all the areas of learning. They relate well to the adults who work with them and trust them. A good balance between adult-led activities and those chosen by the children themselves means that they have good opportunities to improve listening, reading, writing and numeracy while they develop personal skills such as confidence, concentration and co-operation. Members of staff prepare lessons well and generally ensure that learning takes place at a good rate. However, some introductions to lessons do not fully engage the attention of all the children.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader manages the provision well and is always seeking to make improvements. Very thorough arrangements for the observation and assessment of children mean that members of staff know exactly how much progress they are making and where further emphasis would be beneficial, for example in knowledge and understanding of the world. Members of staff are successful in ensuring that parents and carers are fully involved in their children’s education. They are made really welcome in the morning and at the end of the school day. Excellent ‘learning journey’ folders chart children’s progress with a considerable amount of photographic evidence. Parents and carers have access to these at school.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are extremely happy with all aspects of their children’s education. Returns to the questionnaire were completely positive and several parents and carers took the time to write to inspectors to explain how aspects of the school’s provision had really helped their children. Inspectors’ findings very closely matched their positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Westhouses Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 76 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	78	9	22	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	90	4	10	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	21	51	20	49	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	68	13	32	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	78	9	22	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	25	61	16	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	76	10	24	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	26	63	14	34	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	33	80	8	20	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	68	13	32	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	71	12	29	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	88	5	12	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	36	88	5	12	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 8 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



3 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westhouses Primary School, Alfreton, DE55 5AF

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. We were really impressed by your excellent attendance and how keen you are to learn. A particular thank you goes to those of you who filled in our questionnaire or met with us to discuss your school. We were so pleased to find that you behave well and really enjoy being at school.

We found that your school is providing you with a good quality education, and that it has some outstanding features. Teaching is good and there is plenty of opportunity for you to get involved in an extremely wide variety of activities outside lessons. Most of you are making at least good progress and some are doing better than that. We were particularly impressed with the high quality of care, guidance and support that you receive from your teachers and classroom assistants. Mr Grogan and his staff have an excellent system for tracking the progress you are making and we were pleased to see that if any of you need extra help then the school provides it for you.

Your school can still improve further and we have asked the governing body, headteacher and staff to make some changes to enable you to reach even higher standards by the time you leave Year 6. These are to:

- maintain a rapid pace of learning throughout all lessons, especially when you are working in groups, by ensuring that you complete tasks more quickly
- give the older pupils a better understanding of their National Curriculum targets and refer to them in lessons so that they know what they need to do to reach them.

You can help the school to improve by continuing to behave well and work hard.

Yours sincerely

John Paddick
Lead inspector

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